



# DHSS SNAPSHOT

Volume 28, Number 2

May - July 2012

## Director's Message



Here at the Department of Health and Senior Services we are continuing our work toward accreditation. The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) held an accreditation workshop in Jefferson City earlier this summer to begin review of the required documentation we have in place and to determine what still needs to be done to successfully complete the accreditation process.

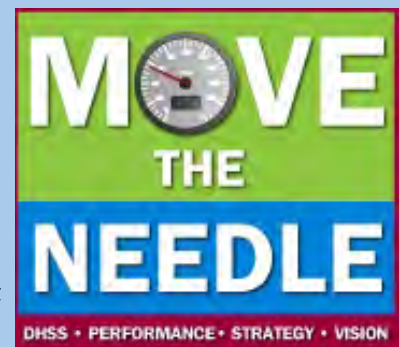
DHSS staff members continue to do their part with efforts to increase education and spread awareness of the importance of developing and tracking performance measures. Two Institute of Management Excellence sessions have been held this year to provide staff with additional information and resources on strategic planning, performance measures, quality improvement and how it all fits together in a performance management system.

On a daily basis I am proud to see the innovations employees are putting into place to better serve the people of Missouri. To recognize these efforts we will begin highlighting programs and achievements

in future editions of the Snapshot Newsletter. The first of these articles is included on page 2 of this issue of Snapshot.

We will continue to provide updates on our performance management progress through the performance management page on the intranet. I encourage you to visit <http://dhssnet/qualityimprovement> to see what we have so far and to provide feedback on additional ways we can improve the quality of our work.

I appreciate the hard work and dedication of each of you here at DHSS and I am confident that together we will continue to Move the Needle.



## Inside:

Saving Time with Background Checks	2	Becker Receives Big Brothers Big Sisters Award	6
Pethan Completes National Training	3	Employees Spring into Action	6
Director's Team Award	4	Radiological Team Responds to Mock Dirty Bomb	7
State Employee of the Month	4	Brad Hall's Legacy Raises Awareness to Fight Obesity	8
Director's Team Award	5	Employee of the Month	9

# Saving **Time** with Background Checks

*Background checks used to take six months, until the Family Care Safety Registry figured out how to do them in zero to 18 days.*

*by Charisse Pappas, public information coordinator, Office of Public Information*

If you need a background check on an employee, the Family Care Safety Registry can do it in roughly zero to 18 days. That's about six months faster than what it used to take.

The registry developed a new, online system that can deliver electronic background screening results much faster to child care centers, long-term care facilities and providers who request them.

"We are rather proud of that," says Melanie Madore, chief of the registry.

The quick turnaround has actually been years in the making. Since 2007, Madore says the registry has been improving performance, one step at a time. "We knew we had a backlog problem, and we knew we had to increase performance."



*Jennifer Taube (l), assistant chief of the Family Care Safety Registry, and Kay Robinson (r), health program representative II, discuss a background check.*

## A Bit of Background on Background Checks

Many factors contributed to the backlog. Demand for background checks increased while the number of employees did not. Staff had to pick up extra duties and use a cumbersome system to perform background screenings.

"The system was especially challenging if caregivers had several names or nicknames, which is often the case," Madore says. "For instance, in the case of a caregiver named 'Lila (Lil for short) Jones-Cooper,' our employees had to do four different background screenings. First they had to check for 'Lila Jones'; then for 'Lila Cooper'; third for 'Lil Jones'; and finally for 'Lil Cooper.' Then they had to merge those four different screenings into one. The process was extremely time consuming."

Now with the registry's Web-based electronic system, a computer automatically checks for a caregiver's multiple names.

"That saves our employees an incredible amount of time," Madore says.

To save even more time, the registry cut three hours daily from the call center.

"At first, there was almost a collective gasp when we cut hours," says Madore. "But we wanted to provide our staff more protected time to process the paper background screening requests and applications we still receive." The registry call center is open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. But staffers actually work from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. They use the extra hours in the morning and afternoon to process requests.

*continued on page 3*



*Background Checks continued from page 2*

Background screening requests continue to rise. Last year, requests jumped 10 percent – to 305,196 from 277,557 in 2010. And the requests are expected to climb another 10 percent this year.

Madore says the demand will continue to soar because the population is aging and needs more care.

The registry now receives 46 percent of background screening requests online. That figure is up from 23 percent in 2010. Online requests reduce staff time and the paper backlog.

“That is good news for us,” says Madore.

*Staff from the Family Care Safety Registry*



**Move the Needle**

## Pethan Completes National Coach-the-Coach Action Learning Training

Coach-the-Coach Action Learning is a different approach to problem solving, developing leaders and improving quality used by government and private agencies across the globe. This approach teaches participants to learn from their own actions and experience to improve performance. Michael Pethan, special health care needs regional coordinator for the Northwestern District, recently completed the training along with Stephanie Browning, administrator of Columbia-Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services.

“The Coach-the-Coach Action Learning training was a new method of learning for me,” said Michael. “It helps participants to think critically and work together. By using this approach team leaders evolve and the problem is solved at the same time.”

The program was a 6 month virtual training program for individuals who want to strengthen their skills as Action-Learning Team Coaches in public health settings. Participants logged into monthly 90 minute webinars facilitated by master coach, Donna R. Dinkin, DrPH, MPH of Dinkin & Associates, LLC. Topics of the training included, *What is Action-Learning?*, *How does an Action-Learning Coach add value to the work of a project team?*, and *What tools and interventions does a coach use in their work?*

Michael and Stephanie join 20 other public health professionals around the country with this training.



Michael Pethan, special health care needs regional coordinator for the Northwestern District, recently completed the national Coach-the-Coach Action Learning training that teaches participants to learn from their own actions and experience to improve performance.

## 2012 First Quarter Director's Team Award

The Division of Community and Public Health, Friendly Records Organization Group (FROG) Team is the recipient of the Director's Award for Meritorious Team Effort for the First Quarter.

Suggestions for improving bureau operations were submitted to the bureau chief for consideration as a continuous quality improvement (CQI) project. Among those suggestions was the need to better organize the filing system on the shared drive so that staff could more efficiently find necessary documents as well as reduce storage space. A team representing the various bureau programs was appointed.

The first action of the team was to develop a charter outlining the project purpose, scope and deliverables. This was followed by a pre-survey conducted of the bureau staff. The survey was sent to 32 staff and revealed:

- 59% could not easily find information stored in the Bureau's electronic file folders.
- 74% could not easily find information stored in other program's electronic file folders.
- 33% spent over 5-15 minutes looking for documents located in their program's electronic file folders.

The team researched best practices for electronic filing guidelines. One year later the team presented its plan for improvement to all the bureau staff. The project was implemented in two phases. The first phase focused on reorganizing and renaming the folders and subfolders using predetermined names so that there is standardization among folders. Phase two focused on the new naming system for records.

The team conducted a post survey that resulted in a 22.5% improvement in respondent's ability to easily find information stored in the bureau's electronic file folders and a 34.8% improvement in respondent's ability to easily find information stored in other program's electronic file folders.

This enhanced efficiency in filing and retrieving electronic records also resulted in a cost savings to the State. The pre-survey showed a cost to the state of \$6,553. After the new filing system was implemented, a post-survey showed a cost to the state of \$3,868.80, a cost savings of \$2,684.20.



*Team members awarded the Director's Award for Meritorious Team Effort include (front row, l. to r.) Dorothy Dolson, Margaret Donnelly, director, Belinda Heimericks, Trisha Garrison. (Back row, l. to r.) Virginia Beatty, Jim Pruitt, Sam Pherigo and Connie Lepper. Not pictured is Dee Bale, a valued member of the team who passed away suddenly during the process. Also not pictured is Noraleen Hord and Jackie Jung.*

## Morgan Honored as State Employee of the Month

Katy Morgan will be honored as June State Employee of the Month during a ceremony on July 23 in the Governor's Office at the Missouri State Capitol. Katy is a scientist at the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory. Katy enabled Missouri to combat a nationwide E. coli outbreak swiftly, after it appeared primarily in St. Louis last fall. Read more on Katy's DHSS EOM at: [health.mo.gov/information/news/snapshot/Mar-Apr12.pdf](http://health.mo.gov/information/news/snapshot/Mar-Apr12.pdf) (page 6).





## 2012 Second Quarter Director's Team Award

The Division of Senior and Disability Services (DSDS) Call Center Transition Team is the recipient of the Director's Award for Meritorious Team Effort for the Second Quarter.

On August 31, 2011, DSDS was notified that their third party assessor that handled all home and community based services (HCBS) assessments would be ending their contract. As a result, the division had to quickly create a call center to resume responsibility for these assessments. The DSDS Call Center was created on September 7, 2011.

The Call Center's main function is to determine eligibility for HCBS. When fully staffed, the Call Center has 15 staff members: 13 agents; a supervisor; and clerical staff member.

Since September 7, 2011, the Call Center has received/processed:

- over 23,000 calls;
- over 3,000 faxes; and
- over 3,500 letters

The Call Center was receiving more calls than could be answered. On January 1, 2012 there were 668 outstanding voice messages which needed to be returned. Due to the outstanding efforts of Call Center staff and staff members from the Bureau of Home and Community Based Contract Oversight and the Director's Office, outstanding voice messages which needed to be returned had been reduced to 19 by February 6.

A process was implemented to sort the voice mail messages in order to expedite the return calls. This involved researching the automated systems to determine if there was an existing HCBS case, the regional office providing the HCBS services, and the current status of the case. The Call Center returned the calls for new referrals which required a prescreen. Other calls were routed on to the appropriate regional office.

These combined efforts have helped to process timely responses to requests for HCBS, while easing the apprehension of DSDS clients and providers during an abrupt transition of a large program.

### Team Participants

Call Center members include: Hollie Smith, Michelle Edwards, Stephanie Alfred, Gary Baughman, Alicia Bayless, Sherrita Bennett, LaShaunda Bowdry, Teela Hall, Charrise Jones, Michael Malone, Patti Milfelt, Tara Schaper, Lakeasha Scott, Carmen Ward and Jennafer Wells. Bureau of Home and Community Based Contract Oversight members include: Chrissy Arnold and Sandy Stroupe. DSDS Director's Office members include: Cindy Jobe, Holly Withrow, Jessica Bax, Valerie Schmidt and Kim Hoehn.

Department Director Margaret Donnelly and DSDS Director Celesta Hartgraves honor the Call Center Transition Team at a reception on June 22 at the Prince Hall Building, St. Louis. The team received the Second Quarter Director's Team Award for their efforts in creating a call center one week after a third party contract was ended. Nearly one year after being created, the call center has processed over 23,000 calls; 3,000 faxes and 3,500 letters.



## Becker Receives Missouri Valley Big Brothers Big Sisters Award

Adopting Stephen Covey's motto, "Learn to listen to understand not to reply", has earned Skip Becker the Outstanding Mentoring Match 2011-12 Award through the Missouri Valley's Big Brothers Big Sisters. As a Big Brother for the program, Skip helps make a positive difference in the lives of the boys he mentors. No matter what situations these young boys are in they all have dreams. By listening too and learning those dreams helps build trust the first step to building a relationship and being a successful mentor.

"Listening to understand, not to judge or reply, is what I try to do in my mentoring for Big Brothers Big Sisters," said Skip Becker, accountant II in the Financial Support Services Unit. "There is such a need for these types of mentoring programs for the younger generation whose home life is disruptive."

Skip's best friend was a Big Brother for the Missouri Valley Big Brothers Big Sisters. He saw the qualities in Skip to become a mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters and asked him if he was interested in becoming a mentor. That was six years ago. Skip's first match was a young boy, Michael whose home life was abusive.

"His childhood was very different than mine, but I tried to make our visits very positive, he really needed that in his life," said Skip.

After Michael moved away, Skip was matched with a boy named Thomas whom he is still currently mentoring.

"Thomas is a fun active young man who needs a little guidance in his life," said Skip. "He is a smart kid who has learned to make the best out of everything because he has so little. One day he showed me his cell phone which had no call or texting plan. But Thomas made the best out of the situation and said that his classmates only saw that he had a phone, but they didn't know that he couldn't use it."

Being a Big Brother has taught Skip not to take things for granted.

"It grounds me every week when I visit Thomas at his school," said Skip. "He's the true hero because he has overcome so many hardships in his life and still looks forward to tomorrow."



*Skip Becker receives the Outstanding Mentoring Match 2011-12 Award through the Missouri Valley's Big Brothers Big Sisters.*

## DHSS Employees Spring into Action

Director Margaret Donnelly kicked off the National Employee Health and Fitness Day on May 16 with remarks on the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and then led a walk on the Greenway. Almost 500 DHSS employees and a total of 3539 state employees participated in the event. Photos of the walk at the Greenway and the State Public Health Laboratory can be viewed at: [health.mo.gov/information/news/snapshot/nehfd.php](http://health.mo.gov/information/news/snapshot/nehfd.php).





## DHSS Radiological Team Responds to Mock Dirty Bomb Release

On June 6-7, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' Radiological Emergency Response Team participated in an Amber Waves technical workshop in Kansas City, KS. The workshop was designed to evaluate equipment and capabilities in a hands-on Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center like setting. The goal of the workshop was to understand how federal, state and local agencies from Missouri and Kansas integrate their technical capabilities during a radiological response. Nineteen DHSS staff from Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology, Bureau of Environmental Health Services, Health Facilities Regulation, Office of Public Information, and Center for Emergency Response and Terrorism participated in this two day event.

Fifteen technical capability stations were established to demonstrate personnel, equipment and expertise and discuss how multiple agency assets could be set up to coordinate response actions. Some of the stations included the Platte County Emergency Response Trailer equipped with video cameras, spotlights, televisions and monitors; FBI booth with mock samples of deadly chemicals and biological weapons; and a remote data monitoring and collection booth.

"Although the Midwest won't have a tsunami to cause a radiological event, the training covered lessons learned from the Japan Fukushima Dai'ichi Nuclear Power Plant releases as if radiological materials were released from a dirty bomb in the Midwest," said Jeff Wenzel, senior epidemiologist specialist, Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology. "This type of training allows us to better utilize our resources with federal, state and local agencies when responding to radiological events."

As part of the workshop, the DHSS Radiological Response Field Team members demonstrated their ability to integrate with federal, state and local responders for the purpose of developing an Incident Action Plan and collecting environmental samples.

"During federally evaluated nuclear power plant drills, this team has been consistently recognized for their exemplary knowledge and performance of carrying out radiological emergency response operations," said Keith Henke, planner III, Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology. "This recognition continues as their demonstration at this workshop was well received by federal, state and local participants."

On June 8th, nine DHSS staff also attended an 8 hour "Emergency Management of Radiation Accident Victims Course" presented by the Department of Energy Radiation Emergency Assistance Center and Training Site. This training educated staff on how medical providers should deal with patients who have injuries complicated with radioactive material contamination.

On July 17-18, 2012, DHSS staff participated in an Amber Waves Senior Leadership Seminar and Table top exercise. The Senior Leadership Seminar (SLS) facilitated discussion intended to provide DHSS leadership an opportunity to discuss policy issues and provide strategic guidance in response to a multi-jurisdictional incident involving and RDD. The Amber Waves Table-Top Exercise (TTX) was a one-day facilitated discussion intended to provide an opportunity for operational staff to discuss the initial response phase (0-72 hrs) of the incident and how state and federal follow-on response activities are integrated into the response.



*Rachelle Kuster (left) from the Bureau of Environmental Health Services, demonstrates Missouri's water sampling technique during the Amber Waves technical workshop held June 6-7.*

## Brad Hall's Legacy Raises Awareness to Fight Obesity

Over 248 runners, walkers and strollers crossed the finish line honoring former employee, Brad Hall to raise awareness about obesity. The Brad C. Hall Memorial 5K event raised over \$4,500 with the proceeds being awarded to the Central Missouri WeCan! Coalition to implement community cooking classes and school gardens. The community coalition was established in 2007 with a main emphasis on creating a healthier school/community environment by providing resources for more nutrition education and physical activity.

"He would be very happy to see so many of his friends from DHSS getting involved and participating in a program that he advocated for both professionally and personally," said Jennifer Hall, Brad's wife. "He struggled with his weight for a long time and enjoyed talking to people who were successful in healthy weight loss and maintaining healthy lifestyles."

Brad was the administrator for the Section for Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention for the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Brad died suddenly on August 11, 2011.

Below are a few quotes from DHSS employees who participated in the Brad C. Hall Memorial 5K event:

"I have to admit this was my first 5K and seeing the large group of runners and walkers at the starting line was awesome! Standing there looking around waiting for the gun to go off, I couldn't help but feel the obvious love Brad had for his family, friends, and co-workers. I'll be there next year!" - Jackie Kilgore

"I love and miss Brad Hall dearly. He was an amazing man and father. I feel blessed to have known him and to have been able to help with his 5K." - Teri Russler

"One of the most important things we have learned from Brad Hall's life is to always enjoy and live each moment to its fullest. He was a dedicated husband and father and I appreciate how devoted Brad was to healthy causes. He encouraged young people to play organized sports, and the importance of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. In memory of Brad, the Memorial 5K raised funds for childhood obesity which couldn't have been a more important cause. Thanks to all those who showed their support his legacy indeed lives on!" - Cindy Jobe

Several department employees were awarded medals for their placement in the 5K race. The first place female walker medal was awarded to Deanna Tillison; second place female walker was awarded to Lisa Pardoe; and third place female walker was awarded to Bethany Stuedle, niece of Shawna Shewmaker. The Hall family has committed to sponsoring another 5K event next year.

"We would like to make this an annual event in Brad's memory and will continue to do our best to make each more successful than the last," said Jennifer. "I believe he was at the finish line personally patting everyone on the back for successfully completing the challenge."

For information about the WeCan projects or to make a donation, contact Mary Telthorst with the Cole County Health Department at [mtelthorst@colecouny.org](mailto:mtelthorst@colecouny.org).







## Employees of the Month



**Melissa Terrill**

**Melissa Terrill** was honored as May Employee of the Month for her dedication to her job and her actions that helped two elderly clients.

One client was being neglected and financially exploited by his primary caregiver, who eventually moved the man to Illinois to avoid scrutiny by Terrill. Terrill worked with Illinois' protective services and the department's Office of General Counsel for 11 months to bring the man back to Missouri and to secure guardianship and conservatorship for him.

The second client, 86, was also a victim of financial exploitation. But he had no family support and could not comprehend that someone was using his credit card and life insurance policy for illegal gain. Terrill worked for 15 months to secure guardianship and conservatorship for him.

"Melissa is a strong advocate for our most vulnerable adults," says Teresa Gentry, Terrill's supervisor in the department's Pike County office at Bowling Green. "In both cases, she persevered though she ran into



**Sharilyn Hilliard**

**Sharilyn Hilliard** was chosen as June Employee of the Month. Last May the department's Section for Child Care Regulation developed regulations that require child care providers to have a written disaster and emergency plan. Hilliard, a child care facility specialist, volunteered to train those providers on how to write and implement such a plan. Those trainings occurred on Saturdays and at night to accommodate the child care provider's schedules.

"By the end of each training, providers had at least a partially

---

roadblocks. She might have used her large work load as a reason to close out the cases, but she kept on. Both men now have the appropriate care and oversight because of Melissa's concern for their best interests."

Melissa lives in Beaufort with her husband, Dillard, and their three children. She looks forward to a summer filled with her children's softball and baseball games, and camping.

completed plan," said Lisa Ivy, Hilliard's former supervisor. "They provided positive feedback on how helpful Sharilyn's trainings were."

Hilliard also exceeded her job duties when a tornado damaged parts of Sedalia last year. Child care specialists made an effort to call each of the licensed child care facilities in the affected area to assure their safety. When one particular facility could not be reached because of downed telephone lines and power failures, Hilliard made a trip there to check on the status of the center. No one was hurt, but they were forced to close temporarily. Hilliard worked quickly to help the facility reopen as soon as possible.

Hilliard lives in Jefferson City with her husband, Brint, and their three children. She enjoys reading English literature and suspense novels, cooking, traveling, and being with family and friends.

The DHSS Snapshot is published by the Office of Public Information.

Suggestions for future articles can be sent to:

Lori.Buchanan@health.mo.gov;  
phone: 573/751-6062;  
fax: 573/751-6041

Gena Terlizzi  
Managing Editor

Lori Buchanan  
Editor